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—Conference Issue
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Issue—July 1969:

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 ardic Temple of Cedarhurst, N.Y.
 —James F. Horner



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 Chase-Park Plaza Hotel St. Louis, Mo.

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NOTES & COMMENTS

WASHINGTON, D. C. CONFERENCE—1970

"The Architecture of Involvement" has been selected as the theme of the 31st National Conference on Religious Architecture to be held in Washington, D. C., April 19-22, 1970. The Program Committee has recommended a departure from usual conference themes and in a dramatic statement has offered the following:

"It is considered that the fundamental problem facing the decaying urban scene is not one of architecture or planning—but of applied moral responsibility, and in the end, religiously motivated response in personal political action. American culture today is dominated by and responsive primarily to the forces of economics and politics; the Washington Conference program proposes to explore this in depth. It is hoped that positive end products for active involvement will be identified; approaches which will identify the present economic, social and religious conflicts, and which can, by individual localized adaptations, yield national results. Architecture 'in the service of religion' is a bland euphemism unless the people are brought to an awareness of the richness of American potential."

This is the challenging thesis upon which the planning committee for the Washington Conference is basing its program. It will be developed and refined, and authorities representing the various concerns and disciplines to be discussed will be participants. Benjamin P. Elliott, AIA, of Silver Spring, Md. is the General Chairman for the Conference; Milton L. Grigg, FAIA, of Charlottesville, Va., and the Rev. Robert W. Hovda, The Liturgical Conference, Washington, D. C., are Program Co-Chairmen. □

BUS TOURS—ST. LOUIS CONFERENCE

On the site now occupied by Saarinen's great monument, the French fur trader, Pierre Laclede, founded the city of St. Louis in 1764, selecting this location because of its abundance of natural provisions and easy access to river transportation. To the south was the mouth of the Ohio River leading to the American colonies in the East, and the Gulf which provided a trade route to Europe. A few miles north was the Missouri, the route to the vast unexplored area of the West.

The first city plan included an area reserved for religious purposes and has been so occupied since 1770. It is presently the site of

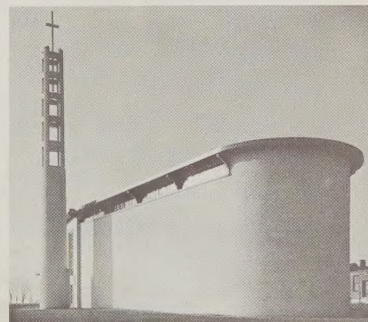
the Basilica of St. Louis (The Old Cathedral) completed in 1834.

The city developed in concentric rings from the hub on the riverfront and had its greatest period of growth just prior to the Civil War. In 1870 the city was the country's third largest.

The construction of religious facilities has moved westward with the movement of the people and in at least one instance to keep pace with the westward trend, a church building was relocated stone by stone. At the time of the 30th National Conference on Religious Architecture, the expansion movement continues in all directions, with some of the metropolitan area's religious facilities now located more than 15 air miles from the Arch. As in most metropolitan areas, there comes a time when the oldest portion of the city must be revitalized. The downtown tour includes two new religious facilities and one church that has been architecturally and socially rejuvenated. □

Continued on page 26

DOWNTOWN TOUR:

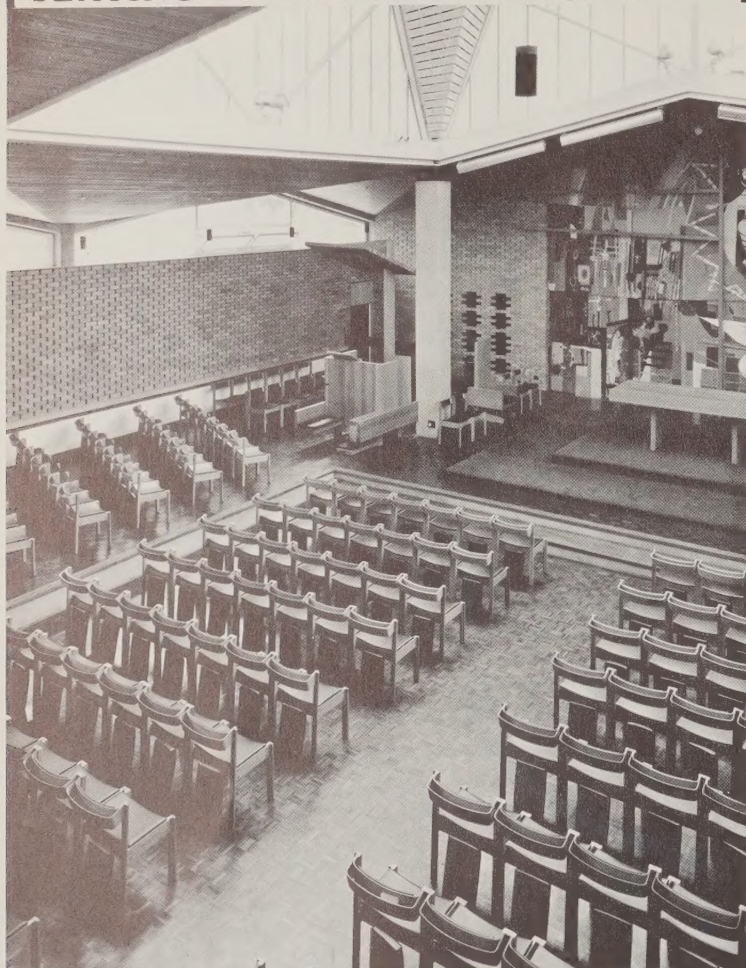


*Holy Cross Lutheran Church for the Deaf
Architects: Froese, Maack & Becker*



*River Front Church Center
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BOOK REVIEWS

*EUROPAISCHE KIRCKENKUNST
DER GEGENWART* by
Erich Widder
Oberstenreichischer
Landesverlag
Linz, Austria 1968 \$20

*L'ARCHITECTURE RELIGIEUSE
CONTEMPORAINE EN FRANCE*
by
Georges Mercier
l'imprimerie-reliure Mame
Tours, France 1968 \$20

REVIEWED BY: E. A. Sövik, FAIA
Northfield, Minn.

The latest of the large, handsome (and expensive) books on church architecture to come from the European press are both impressive and illuminating, partly because they bring the record of what is being done in Europe more nearly up to date, and exhibit for one thing, some of the effects of Vatican II on completed buildings.

Dr. Widder's book is an orderly and beautiful volume. The textual material (for those who can handle German) is comprised of an introduction, short descriptions of each of the projects presented in the photographs, together with a good number of plans. The selection of material is superb, and it is organized into national groupings. Almost all of the work done since 1950, and a good many of the projects have been published before. The photographs and printing are excellent; both architecture and examples of ecclesiastical art are included and there are six fine color plates of glass work. Dr. Widder is an art historian and critic as well as theologian. Perhaps a brief and free translation of some sentences from the introduction will provide a sense of his point of view: "Every art is the expression of the eternal in Man; every work of art has a religious foundation. In religious images these profound intuitions intersect the conscious knowledge of the transcendent; vital art is the incarnation of true religious values."

Dr. Mercier's book bears the subtitle "Toward a Synthesis of the Arts." It is more journalistic in presentation with a variety of drawings and photographs, offset printing, and it is more limited in scope. But although its focus is on new French churches, it relates them to other work being done elsewhere in the world. The pictures deal less with artifacts and more with architecture; despite this the work represented seems less architectonic. Perhaps this is to be expected, considering the theme of the book. One has the sense that architecture is being presented as if it were sculpture or image rather than tool or thing. Structure is explored for its patterns and rhythms, buildings are studied as painterly or plastic. Such an approach should expand the minds of people who are used to viewing technology in terms of economics, and form in terms of physical functions.

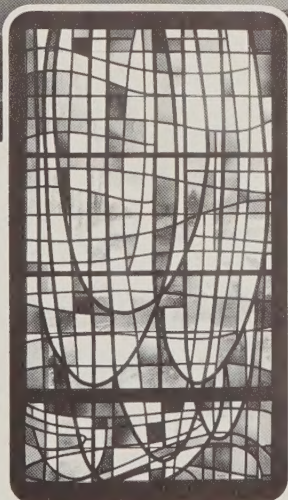
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LETTERS

Dear Editor:

Without diminishing too much of the importance of the visionary church buildings which Rudolf Schwarz designed, and without intending to dim the illumination that can be found in the reprint of Schwarz's speech which you published in the last issue of *Faith and Form*, I should like to make what I think is a valid criticism of Schwarz's approach to church building.

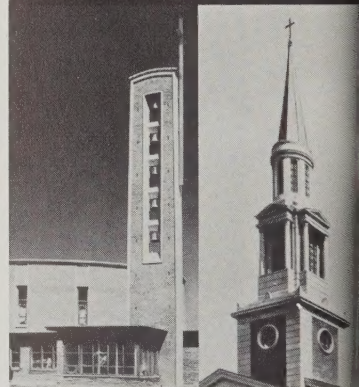
In this speech, in *The Church Incarnate*, in other writings of his, and also in a large number of his actual church buildings, he presents the church building not so much as a structure which has certain useful purposes and a certain character as a thing in itself, but as an image, a picture, a representation of something else. Thus St. Michael's is a "cosmos" into which the prayers of the faithful are raised, another church is a "chalice" through which God ministers his presence, another is a "pilgrimage," another is a "city of God." And the form of the church is established by the image selected.

This pattern of thought is similar to the medieval, except that in those days there was only one image, which was the image of the New Jerusalem, the habitation of God. Schwarz thought the medieval churches were the greatest churches of history. I think they were great architectural fantasies, but poor churches.

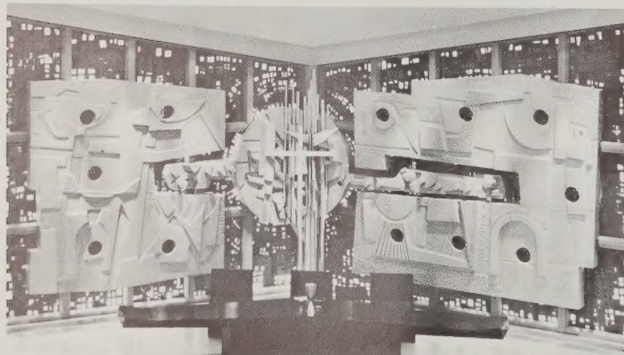
I think it is wrong to approach architecture their way. Architecture is not a picture of something; it *is* something. The painter and sculptor and poet make images (nowadays they don't always do it either); the architect and musician make things. At least this is the main track. Although some music is imagistic (The Pines of Rome, The Engulfed Cathedral, Till Eulenspiegel) almost all music deals directly with the sensibilities. Architecture generally also does not depend on iconography for its meaning, but deals directly with the sensibilities.

I am convinced that architecture has no business dealing in images. It should be more authentic, more real, more elemental, less intellectualized; and I think that of all architecture church buildings ought to avoid dealing in pictures. I saw not so long ago some drawings of a church named for the Holy Spirit which was planned in a shape which from an airplane would look like a bird. There is a church in Germany which in plan is shaped like an omega, and is joined by a tower shaped like an alpha. These are silly examples of image making. But I think it always a little silly to make buildings into images of things; they *are* things. And the virtue of Schwarz was that despite this eccentric theory about architecture he did good buildings. The best of them I think are Corpus

Continued on page 29



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The Decade Ahead in Religious Architecture

THE 30th NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE



REX L. BECKER, FAIA—General Chairman, 30th National Conference on Religious Architecture

A native of St. Louis and graduate of Washington University, Mr. Becker has been a principal in the firm of Froese, Maack & Becker since 1946. He is a Fellow of The American Institute of Architects and Regional Director for the Central States Region.



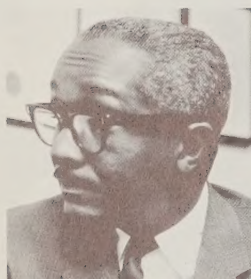
Rex L. Becker

What will life be like in the next decade? What is organized religion's task during the next decade? Addressing himself to the foregoing questions, THE REV. FREDERICK R. McMANUS will open the first plenary session of the St. Louis Conference.

The Rev. McManus is Director of the Secretariat, Bishops' Commission on the Liturgical Apostolate, Washington, D. C., and Professor of Canon Law at Catholic University. He has been President of The Liturgical Conference, Peritus at II Vatican Council, 1962-65, and is editor of *The Jurist*.



The Rev. Frederick R. McManus



Howard B. Woods

HOWARD B. WOODS, Editor and Publisher of the St. Louis Sentinel, will be the Keynote Speaker at the St. Louis Conference on Religious Architecture; his topic—"New Answers for Old Questions."

In addition to his newspaper work, Mr. Woods has participated in a broad variety of government, civic and welfare activities. He was appointed by President Johnson to the post of Associate Director (Program Development) with the U. S. Information Agency and served from 1965 to 1967, resigning to become Editor-in-Chief of Sengstacke Publications, which include the Chicago Daily Defender, Michigan Chronicle in Detroit and New Pittsburgh Courier among others. Mr. Woods will address the Conference at the opening luncheon meeting, Tuesday, April 29.



Charles A. Blessing

CHARLES A. BLESSING, FAIA, Director of City Planning of Detroit, Mich., will open the Second Plenary Session concerned with life in the urban community and planning to meet it.

Mr. Blessing is among the few city planners who have university degrees in architecture, engineering and city planning. He is a Fellow of The American Institute of Architects, served two terms as National President of the American Institute of Planners, and has been Chairman of the City Planning Division of the American Society of Civil Engineers. His interests have included comprehensive planning at city, regional and state level as well as urban design and architecture at city and regional scale.



Dr. Henry Lee Willet

DR. HENRY LEE WILLET—President, National Conference on Religious Architecture, Inc.

Dr. Willet is Chairman of the Board of the Willet Stained Glass Studios of Philadelphia, Pa. He is a Fellow of The Stained Glass Association of America and The Royal Society of Arts, as well as an Honorary Member of The American Institute of Architects and the Catholic Fine Arts Society. In 1963 he received the Conover Memorial Award from the Church Architectural Guild of America (former name of Guild for Religious Architecture).

ALTHEER J. WEFEL, Jr. — President,
ld for Religious Architecture

Wefel is principal of his Shaker
ghts, O. architectural firm, which
founded in 1915 by his father. He
born in Cleveland, O., received
training at the Miami University
ool of Architecture, Oxford, O., and
service in World War II as a B-17
t. Mr. Wefel has been a member of
Guild since 1954, and is a member
of The American Institute of
nitects.



er J. Wefel, Jr.



r Justus P. Kretzmann

REV. JUSTUS P. KRETZMANN —
gram Chairman — 30th National
ference on Religious Architecture

or Kretzmann is a native of New
x City, and was ordained to the
istry, Lutheran Church in 1939. He
ed as a missionary in Nigeria for
ve years, and is presently Pastor of
Lutheran Church of the Atonement
lorissant, Mo.

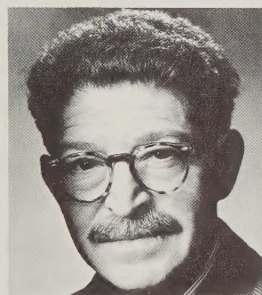
has been chairman of the Program
mmittee for the St. Louis Conference,
operation with Rabbi Julius Nodel
the Right Rev. Monsignor
ph Baker.

RT. REV. MONSIGNOR JOSEPH W.
BAKER — Co-Chairman, Program
Committee — 30th National Conference
on Religious Architecture

Monsignor Baker is a native of St. Louis,
and was one of the first of the post-war
seminarians to receive ordination to the
priesthood in Rome. He is presently
Director of the Archdiocesan Office for
Ecumenical Affairs and Chairman of the
Ecumenical Department of the
Missouri Catholic Conference.



Rt. Rev. Monsgr. Joseph W. Baker



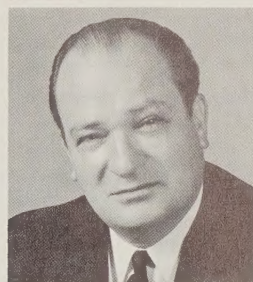
Percival Goodman

PERCIVAL GOODMAN, FAIA, of New
York City, will address the Third Plenary
Session, Thursday, May 1, on the topic
"The Haunting Problem of Irrelevance"
— the subject under discussion being
how can art and architecture help
churches and synagogues in their task.

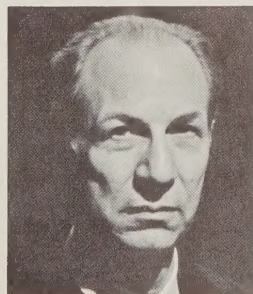
Mr. Goodman received his professional
education in France and began his
architectural practice in 1936. Since
1947 he has been on the Faculty of
Columbia University's School of
Architecture where he is now Professor.
He was among the first of American
architects to use painting and
sculpture in his buildings, incorporating
the work of Ferber, Lipton, Lassaw,
Motherwell, Gottlieb and Rattner. He is
a Fellow of The American Institute of
Architects, and a Fellow of The
International Institute of Arts and Letters.

RABBI JULIUS J. NODEL — Co-
Chairman, Program Committee — 30th
National Conference on Religious
Architecture

Rabbi Nodel is presently the Senior
Rabbi of Temple Shaare Emeth in St.
Louis, Mo. He is a graduate of the
Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati,
O., and has received Honorary degrees
from Philathea College, London, Ont.,
Canada and Hebrew Union College-
Jewish Institute of Religion. He is a
founding member of the Interfaith
Clergy Council of St. Louis and a
member of the Board of Governors of
the Pastoral Counseling Institute,
St. Louis.



Rabbi Julius J. Nodel



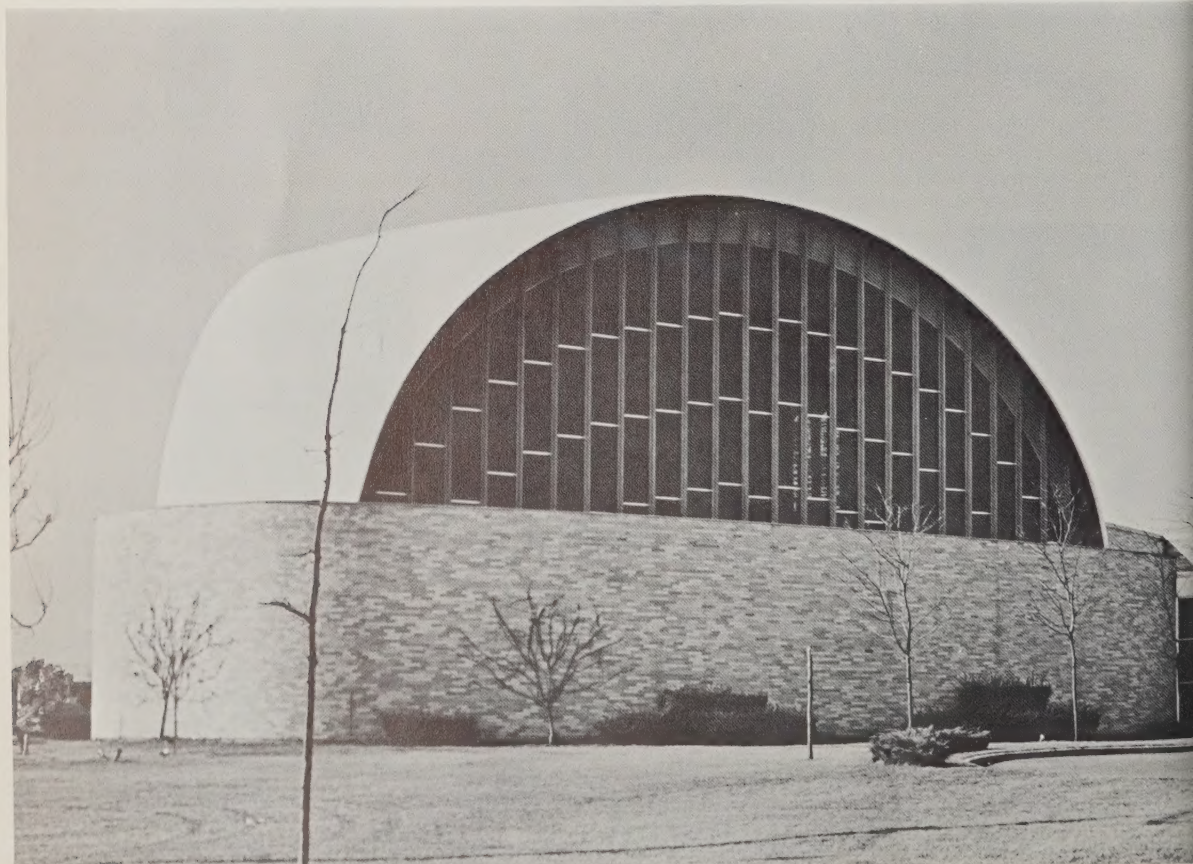
Dr. Joseph Sittler

DR. JOSEPH SITTLER of the Faculty of
The Divinity School, University of
Chicago, is the scheduled banquet
speaker at the St. Louis Conference,
Thursday evening, May 1; his topic:
"Solomon — Patron Saint of Architects!"

Dr. Sittler has been President of the
American Theological Society and a
delegate to the World Council of
Churches meeting in New Delhi, India,
1961. He is the author of several
volumes, the most recent being *The
Anguish of Preaching*, published in
1967. He is a frequent contributor to
religious publications and a noted
lecturer and Chapel Preacher.

THE SEPHARDIC TEMPLE of Cedarhurst, New York

by Bertram L. Bassuk, AIA, GRA



Behind the Sephardic Temple of Cedarhurst, N.Y. is the 1400 year history of a unique branch of Judaism that flourished within Islam for a millenium and sustained by the Jews in post-Saracenic Iberia until their expulsion during the years of the Spanish Inquisition. The Jews in exile, and their descendants are called Sephardim, a name derived from the Hebrew word, Sepharad, meaning Spain.

Under Islam, the second great faith-ization to spring from Judaism, Jews enjoyed freedom of opportunity and respect in every walk of secular life; except for their respective religious beliefs, and Mohammedan were undifferentiated. Through participation in the Arts and Sciences, Jews transfused Isla-

mic civilization with Judaeo-Graeco-Roman thought, inadvertently forming a bridge between Hellenism and the cultural Renaissance in Western Europe.

When the light of the Crescent was eclipsed by the Cross in the Fourteenth Century it brought an end to cultural darkness in Christendom, but cast shadows across the lives of the Jews of Spain and Portugal. Spanish Feudal Catholicism, in a death-struggle against the Reformation and the nascent precapitalist merchant-states, was to crack down hard on its Christian heretics, and mark the Jews for conversion.

From the 14th to the 16th Century, Jews who converted in order to escape the autos-da-fé, yet secretly held to Judaism, were dubbed Maranos (accursed

ones) by the Jews who openly defied the Inquisition. For the latter, survival meant exile to wherever they would be tolerated, the escape routes leading to the Balkans, North Africa, Asia Minor (the Ottoman Empire), and also to Persia, India and China. After 1492, a few Sephardic Jews landed in the Dutch colonies of South America, while others reached France, The Netherlands, and Cromwellian England.

A portent of future Jewish migration to the Americas was the presence of a Jew, one Luis de Torres, in the crew of the flagship of Columbus. His knowledge of Hebrew and Arabic qualified him as the interpreter for the expedition, since it was expected that these would be the languages of the natives of the New World.

The influx of Jews into North America, however, did not occur until the 17th Century, coming first from the Dutch Colonies of South America, and later from The Netherlands and England. Traditionally, and for self-protection these Sephardic refugees organized congregations and built synagogues wherever they settled: In Dutch Brazil (1634); in Willemstad, Curacao (1654), where their synagogue, Mikve Israel, still stands; in New Amsterdam, where three Dutch Brazilian Jews received permission to set up their Congregation, Sheareth Israel in 1655, but were not to build their synagogue on Mill or Beaver Street until 1695, after the city became New York, under the British; in Newport, Rhode Island where Rabbi Touro founded and built the famous Synagogue of Congregation Jeshuat Israel (1763); and in Charleston, South Carolina, where in 1792, the cornerstone of Congregation Beth Elohim was laid.

After the 15th Century, Spanish Judaism was displaced by German and Slavic Judaism from the dominant European role in the Jewish historical drama. Nevertheless, the Sephardim clung proudly and passionately to a remembrance of past glories, for among their ancestors were such luminaries as Moses Maimonides of Cordova, and Benedict (Baruch) Spinoza of Amsterdam, whose contributions to Western thought attest to the seminal cultural influence of Sephardic Jewry. This ethnic identity was bolstered also by their secular use of Ladino, a tongue based upon Mediaeval Spanish, while Hebrew continued to be



the language of prayer and liturgy. In addition, world-wide fraternal ties were reactivated in the struggle to survive, and thereby build up their economic resources through foreign trade and commerce. This was advantageous not only to themselves, but also to their Dutch and British host-nations, who needed new markets, raw materials and means of foreign exchange.

Meanwhile, a distinct and separate form of Judaism had been developing concurrently in the mediaeval ghettos and hinterlands of Western and Central Europe. Pushed east of the Rhine by the reactionary pressure of Feudal Catholicism, these Jews lived in isolation and insecurity, tolerated only for their usefulness to the nobility as merchants or financial dealers. Herded within an Eastern European Pale of Settlement, they were physically and functionally excluded from the institutions of Polish and Russian society. They have since become known, collectively, as the Ashkenazic Jews.

In contrast to Sephardim, the Ashkenazim were religionists, Talmudists and mystics. They spoke Yiddish, a jargon based upon Mediaeval German, written in Hebrew characters, and developed their own variety of religious practices. After 1400 A.D. Ashkenazic Judaism was to emerge as the dominant branch of European Jewry.

These historically-conditioned distinctions have persisted, and still manifest themselves in subtle ways. The Sephardim, with their prior background of cosmopolitan sophistication, tend to regard the Ashkenazim with patrician hauteur; the classic stance of the urbanite vis-a-vis the provincialite. But this was also to be found amidst Ashkenazim, in the attitude of the German toward the Slavic Jew; or that of the ghetto Jew of the mediaeval town toward his relatively backward brother of the rural village, or *shtetl*.

Although members of both branches were to migrate to the Western Hemisphere, and to the United States in particular, most of them were Ashkenazic Jews, either Russians or Poles fleeing Czarist oppression at the turn of the 20th century, or German Jews escaping from the Hitler holocaust before World War II. The influx of Sephardim was always relatively small, coming mainly from the Balkans and Asia Minor. The hospitality of American society produced an historic parallel, in that Jews were again to become integral to the fabric of the host-civilization. Although the Ashkenazim were to become, by dint of numbers, the

dominant Jewish element within American civilization, the Sephardic identity was nevertheless sustained, and is still a vital component of American Jewry.

The intent of the foregoing is to give some historical perspective to the Congregation Emeth V'Shalom, which was established at the turn of this century in Brooklyn, New York, and whose sons, in 1961, envisioned a new Sephardic Temple in Cedarhurst, New York. Their effort was significant, both as an act of faith, and of affirmation of their unique heritage.

Along with the architectural commission, I was given an introduction to Sephardic historical antecedents, conveyed to me by two representatives of the Congregation: Committee Chairman Jack Baker and Rabbi Arnold B. Marans. This was also to be the beginning of an unusual experience in architect-sponsor collaboration.

They were to communicate to me a poignant yearning for architectural symbols that would evoke images associated with their ethnic background. The images were eloquently conveyed, and were persistent and undeniable. Although distilled from a mixture of Romanticism, archeology and myth, they were presented in specific architectural terms: a domical element, associated with the Levant; and the decorative motifs to be found inside the mediaeval synagogues of Spain. These symbolic elements demanded a place in the program, and were to exert a strong influence upon the formulation of an architectural intention. I considered it a prime responsibility to translate these yearnings into relevant and spontaneous architectural form.

The building design was to be based upon the following program:

FIRST PHASE OF CONSTRUCTION (42,000 sq. ft.)

A. SPACES FOR PRAYER-ASSEMBLY

Sanctuary: 250 permanent pews, in a traditional Sephardic arrangement, wherein the pews are grouped around a large central bay in which stands the Reader's Platform (Bema). Contrary to custom, a separate section for women was to be omitted. Capability of a 600 seat expansion into space contiguous with the Sanctuary but visually and acoustically separable; this space was to be utilized also for receptions and socials. Expansion of seating is occasional.

Chapel: To seat 75 for daily services

Outdoor Ceremonial Space: A Sukkah garden for festivals.

B. SPACES FOR SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Social Halls—Auditorium to serve 400 at banquets, with a stage and related areas. To be used intermittently for other purposes.
Sanctuary seating expansion.

Men's Social Center

Youth Activities Room

Lobby—Foyer and Reception Room

C. SPACES FOR EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONS

Three Classrooms

Library—Museum (and Board Room)

D. SPACES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND CUSTODIAL FUNCTIONS

Administrative and Business Offices

Rabbi's Study

Custodian's Apartment

Kitchens (meat and dairy)

Storage, Maintenance, Mechanical

Equipment, Toilets, and various ancillary spaces.

Primary spaces.

Parking Field

PHASE TWO (24,000 sq. feet):

Educational and recreational expansion

Additional Classrooms

Gymnasium, Natatorium and related spaces

Outdoor Playground

ARCHITECTURAL SOLUTION:

The design-challenge of the sanctuary consisted in resolving the contradiction inherent in combining a round, centric, static, domical form (Figure A) with a linear, non-static, directional plan (Figure B) necessitated by expansion of seating into an adjoining social space.

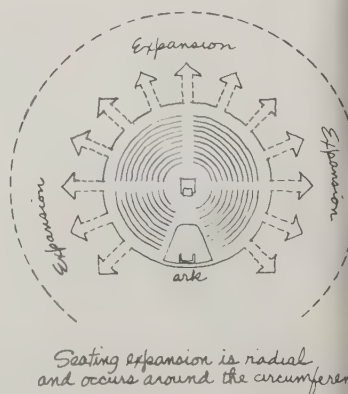


FIGURE A

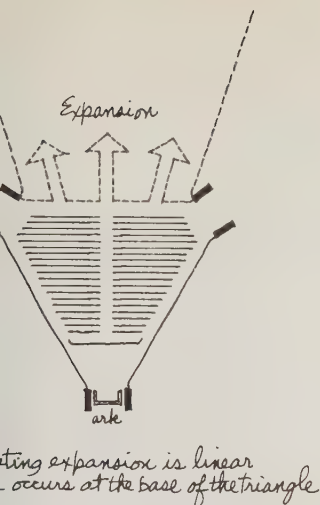


FIGURE B

This was accomplished by use of a triangular plan form (which offers uni-directional expansion by extension beyond its base-side), in combination with a superimposed spatial volume which was to give emphasis to the sanctuary proper. These two basic forms were then encompassed by walls forming an ovoid enclosure (Figure C). The layout of pews and Reader's Platform (Bema) in the sanctuary was to be a modified traditional Sephardic arrangement (Figure D) which contains parallel and opposite bays flanking a wide central aisle containing the Bema. Departure from precedent, with committee approval, consisted of turning the pews toward the Ark, and eliminating the separate section for women (Figure E).

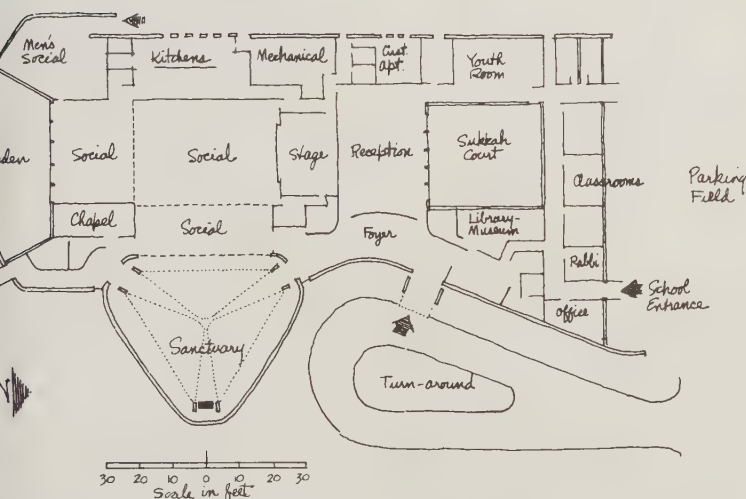
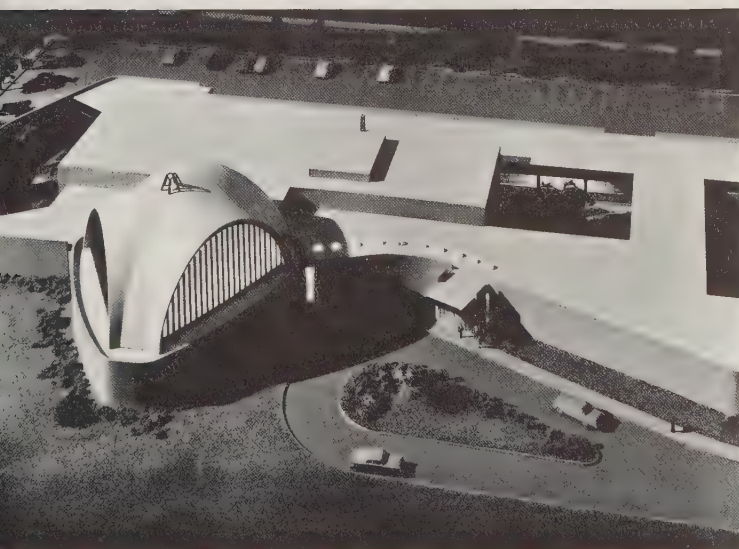


FIGURE C



But a forced reversion to a traditional arrangement followed an unexpected review of our plans by a visiting patriarch, the former Chief Rabbi of Yugoslavia, who severely censured this departure from custom. Since this took place after the Sanctuary walls and superstructure had been erected, it introduced a discordance between form and content in plan (Figure D). Apart from this unforeseeable external influence, the over-all architectural design was developed within the following environmental context:

Site & Environs: A 6½ acre treeless marshland site, surrounded by empty flatlands to the North and West. Along its easterly border is Branch Boulevard, a major local artery, its southerly border formed by a secondary street. On the far sides of both these streets are densely placed, single-family homes. The marshland level was originally 6 feet below the existing curb level, but was raised 4 feet above curb level, to form a platform on which to build.

View & Visibility: To achieve privacy and dignity, and to induce a feeling of shelter, it was necessary to shield against the lights and eyes of passing automobiles. This led to an inward-oriented plan with internal garden-courts; a pattern characteristic of the domestic architecture of the Levant.

Noise & Privacy: The chief sources of noise were the autos along Branch Boulevard and the intermittent sounds of jet aircraft using adjacent Kennedy International Airport. Acoustical and visual control were achieved simultaneously by use of continuous enclosing walls of masonry, maximizing its opacity to light and sound by minimizing its fenestration.

Facade Aspects: The many-sided exposure dictated simplicity and boldness in the treatment of the enclosing walls. They are of light-toned brick masonry and at a consistent height of 16 feet.

Formal Symbolism: The building rises from the raised platform of earth. The long horizontal expanse of wall offers a visual spring-line for the arches of the triple-vaulted superstructure, whose semi-circular arches, clerestories and roof surfaces constitute the focal architectural element (Figure F). Although suggestive of a dome, the shape of the superstructure is actually a composite of 3 intersecting vaults, formed by 3 pair of semi-circular main arches that spring from the corners of an isosceles triangle in plan, and converge in a steel compression connector 45 feet above the floor.

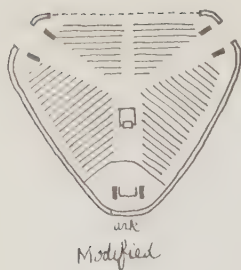


FIGURE D

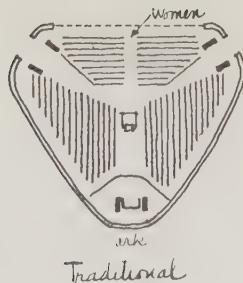


FIGURE E

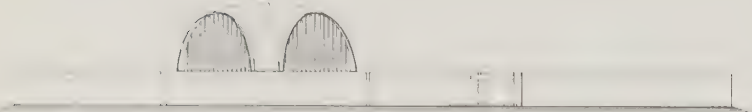


FIGURE F

At floor level, the members of each pair of arches are about 8' apart. This permits insertion of the Ark between the arch-pair at the easterly apex, and allows for entrance of the congregants through each set of arch-pairs at the base-corners. The Ark, in its traditional easterly location, is the visual focal point of the Sanctuary; while the seating expansion occurs between the other two sets of arches. Spanning the sides of the isocoles triangle are peripheral arches, which form clerestory openings subdivided by timber hanger-mullions, 18' deep, that support the lower, horizontal roofs.

Light: Between these mullions are fixed-lights of amber-tinted safety glass, which soften the natural light that enters above eye-level of the congregants. The mullions, due to their depth, also contribute to the control of sun and glare. The rear clerestory area, originally conceived as a mural Menorah of stained glass, now contains two small stained-glass windows, symbolizing the Decalogue. This substitution was due to limited funds. Artificial illumination of the Sanctuary is required only at night and on overcast days. The light sources are incandescent, and the luminaires are arranged in patterns related to the structural elements of the superstructure.

Interior Treatment: The arched-vault roof system of the Sanctuary is built of

glued-laminated timbers, topped by three-inch wood plank decking. The framing members and the deck are exposed to view. Unfortunately, a continuation of the structural timber system into the adjoining social spaces was precluded by the local Building Code. This necessitated the use of steel joists and deck, protected by a suspended ceiling of fire-resistive mineral-fiber tile. The interior of the Sanctuary is finished in the same light-toned brick used on the exterior.

Exterior Treatment: The Sanctuary roof is surfaced with a special plastic membrane, selected for its two-way stretchability and economy. Five years of exposure has produced no apparent reduction in the whiteness of its applied, integrally-bonded coating.

Works of Special Craftsmanship: The awarding of commissions to design and execute an Ark, stained-glass windows, and Calligraphy or Symbols, was done through competitions; which, incidentally, provided additional opportunity for collaboration. The Ark, designed and executed by Emanuel Milstein of New York City, is an unique conception built of reinforced fiberglass and coated with gold-leaf. The symbol employed as its central motif was adapted from a decorative element found in the ancient Syna-

gogue of Toledo, Spain. The Ark stands about 20 feet high by 8 feet wide.

The Hebrew lettering on the fascia under the clerestories, and above the Ark, were also the work of Milstein.

The stained-glass windows in the rear (westerly) clerestory, containing the Decalogue, were designed and executed by Jean-Jacques Duval, of New York City. The Star of David symbol and the Temple name, mounted alongside the Main Entrance, were designed by Committee Chairman Baker, punctuating the collaborative involvement. At a late date, Mr. Baker undertook the design of the interior of the daily chapel, where, improvising on a mediaeval Spanish theme, he achieved a result that is much admired and appreciated by the congregation.

Landscaping: Unfortunately, an opportunity to enhance the building was lost when, instead of authorizing the architect to retain a landscape consultant, the committee hired a local nurseman to do the job. The awkwardness of the transition from site to building is too apparent.

Retrospective: I consider this project to have influenced both my approach to design and my attitude to construction. It convinced me that the design process can be fortified by purposive collaboration between Architect and Committee, especially with regard to expression of cultural and social content. Moreover, I feel that such collaboration need not in any way compromise the architect in his search for spontaneous and relevant architectural form, nor inhibit his creativity.

A much different lesson, however, was learned with regard to an approach to construction, and is passed on as a warning to architects to discourage a tendency of the Committee to assume as they did in this case, the responsibilities of a General Contractor. All the expected monetary savings were later offset by expenditures for corrective work stemming from faulty construction arising from their inexperience as builders. Such monies would have been more wisely spent as payment for the services of an experienced and reliable general contractor.

Religious buildings should inspire man's best effort—for the attainment of Architecture requires nothing less.

THE SEPHARDIC TEMPLE OF CEDARHURST
NEW YORK
COMPLETED: 1963
ARCHITECT: BERTRAM L. BASSUK, AIA, GRAN
NEW YORK, N.Y.
ASSOCIATED ARCHITECT: JULIUS STEIN, AIA,
NEW YORK, N.Y.

OF GOD AND PLACE AND THE FUTURE

Conversation With Karel L. Sijmons

Trevor Wyatt Moore*



Pennsylvania farmhouse may seem an unlikely setting for an interview with a distinguished European architect. But it is exactly where Karel L. Sijmons, his delightful wife, Tony, were to be married recently, as house guests of the Fry Lee Willets.

Mr. Sijmons, whose designs for Reformed churches in his native Netherlands—at Amsterdam, Aerdenhout, and Hague-Loosduin—have caused international stir, had come to the United States to attend the opening of an exhibition by his friend, painter Willem Kooning, at the Museum of Modern Art. From New York, the Sijmons had come to Princeton (“All those buildings at that university look like churches. The ice-skating hall looks like a church!”); to Chicago, and to Dubuque, where the architect has been retained as consultant for a joint Presbyterian-Reformed-Roman Catholic seminary building project. They had returned to Dubuque as guests of honor at the Willets’ house on the occasion of a pre-installation showing of the “Teilhard de Chardin window” executed by the Philadelphia artist in Farbigem technique for the Riverside Park Methodist Church in Jacksonville, Florida.

Walking into the somewhat unsettling American habit of demanding from

visitors their immediate impressions of everything from hot dogs to foreign policy, we pressed for Mr. Sijmons’ impressions of American church architecture, and received a somewhat unsettling answer.

“Some of your churches are quite beautiful. I don’t know the names of the architects, but there are some very beautiful churches here. On the other hand, there are so many banal churches. In your country, I think all is possible: the beautiful things and the very bad things, there seems to be no middle way. Your architecture is never mediocre. It is always very good—or very bad!”

What is Mr. Sijmons’ personal approach to designing a church?

“When an architect builds a church, he has always to deal with traditions. People want to build churches, and people are quite traditional. As an architect, then, one has to deal with concepts that are already thousands of years old. People want to build *their* church as an exercise in the triumphalism of *their* faith, and they want it to be expressed in that special church.

“I come from a Calvinist tradition. In Holland, the Calvinists have always been fewer in number than the Catholics. They have never held the idea that they represented a triumphal church. They were always representatives of a minority of the Dutch people. So, when I’ve been faced with the problems of building a church, I’ve had nothing to do with traditions. I could throw them over-

board very easily. It would be difficult to do so, however, if I had been asked to build a Roman Catholic church.”

Although Mr. Sijmons has never designed a Roman Catholic church, Dutch Catholics have been most enthusiastic over his designs for Reformed churches. And with the swift development of new theology among Dutch Catholics, it would seem that they, too, will soon be throwing tradition overboard.

Said Mr. Sijmons, “Priests now seem to want to leave their ‘comfortable’ churches and they want to go to the people. When I juried a competition for young Dutch architects who submitted designs for Roman churches, the plan which was finally chosen was not a church at all. It was a marketplace. I asked, ‘But what is a priest doing here?’ and they answered, ‘The priest must come out from the people and make himself *true* again.’ So you see, the Catholics are beginning to throw all those things, all those traditions, and all their thinking of a thousand years or more overboard, and are starting anew. The Roman Catholics in Holland seem to be not only throwing out the baby with the bath water, but the tub as well!”

Did he feel that this was a good thing?

“Well, I don’t believe one can throw all his traditions away, because one must live with his traditions. But one may express them in a different way, and that is a good thing.

“The church building consisted of beautiful materials, beautiful interiors,

*Trevor Wyatt Moore is an editor of the national monthly, *Catholic Viewpoints*.

beautiful communion tables, and, in the Catholic churches, beautiful tabernacles. The church was the house of a rich bourgeois. And now, the Church feels uncomfortable as that rich bourgeois. People want very simple churches, a sort of 'flea-market' where everyone can come in."

Mrs. Sijmons contributed to the conversation at this time. "You know," she said, "I was brought up as a Roman Catholic and taught by nuns. We became fed up with dogma. Every time we asked a question, we were told to stop! Just believe; never question. Now, the priests are throwing all the dogma overboard. In the old days, the Jesuits used dogma to save their institution. I suspect that today, they are throwing away the dogma for the very same reason—to save the institution. People are quite at a loss, because they don't know what to believe. I think an entire generation must pass before people begin to believe again. Liturgies and dogma—they are not important anymore. It's a good thing. It has come to a boiling point in the Catholic Church, and I think that's a good thing, too."

Being somewhat unsure ourselves, we asked: "Well, don't you think that liturgy as 'celebration' is important?" Mrs. Sijmons answered the query.

"The celebration is important as long as there is something to celebrate—some central point in the church's theology. I believe that faith in the Resurrection is important as the central point of Christian faith, but it is that very central point which is in question at the moment, the point about which everyone is unsure. The only thing that people are sure of is that they are unsure."

"But don't you think that's a very good thing after all those years of comfortable 'sureness'—to be at last *unsure*? Because people have begun thinking again. Of course, one always keeps the things that are important to one's self. Those things become a 'church' for one's self. One can never lose it. One is still a Christian, but in a different way."

As "radical" Catholics, we asked Mr. Sijmons if he concurred with our view that churches, as buildings, were "out."

"Yes, of course," he replied. "Any question regarding 'trends' in church architecture is very important. How can one attempt to predict what a 'church' will look like in 20 or 30 years, if one is not sure that the Church itself will exist after 20 or 30 years? At least as we know it, as a structured institution. I think—and that is why I stopped building churches altogether about five years

ago—that the Church will go underground. It will continue as a moral force, of course."

"In my opinion, there is no crisis in church architecture. The crisis is in faith. We see it in the new theology of Tillich, Bonhoeffer, and Robinson. As the theologians tell us that 'God is dead' or that 'God has left us,' what has an architect to do with an assignment for church-building? I found, for myself, that in building churches, I become too emotionally involved. My last church, in Amsterdam, nearly killed me. It was possible to build it only because there were a few people in the community who had confidence in me."

We asked the architect if he felt that the simple, stark church might be a passing fad; if indeed he did not think that the pendulum might swing once more to the baroque horrors we have known in the past.

His answer was negative. "No, if church buildings continue to exist, to be built, their form will not return to baroque expressions, but to 'Early Christian,' which is a good thing."

"And," he continued, "the crisis in faith is bound to swing from the negative to the positive side. I liked very much Van Buren's *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*, and still more, Harvey Cox's *The Secular City*. They both speak of the importance of life in the secular area, but they permit one to retain proper perspectives."

"Now, particularly in the Netherlands, the young Catholics give a radical answer. One must build a meeting place; a 'flea-market' instead of a church, where everybody can walk in and out, speak openly about what they think in regard to the Church, the pope, the celibacy of the priesthood, birth control, etc. Speaking for myself, I reject the 'flea-market' solution, but, on the other hand, I have never believed in 'religious' architecture. An architect must have a vision that no one else can tell him about, let alone, to give it to him on a programmed platter. There must be a 'restoration of a sense of place' as emphasized by Harvey Cox in his article of the same name which appeared in *Faith & Form* in October, 1968. With this sort of thinking, there is no place for 'multi-purpose' space. A building that is so multilateral that we can use it for anything has no use at the end for anything."

We told Mr. Sijmons that one of the greatest concerns among American Christians these days is for "Christian Education." Is this concern, we wondered, also common to Europe?

"Somewhat," he answered. "The church I did at Aerdenhout has a Sunday school complex. They make use of it as a creche for very small children, but the adults don't seem to want church space anymore. I think the 'Christian education' thing is 'out' in a parochial setting. Young children go to school with others of all faiths—Jews, Catholics, Protestants. Their discussions begin at a very early age, and they've already come to conclusions by the time they've grown up."

Mr. Sijmons returned to the theme of the multipurpose room, and remarked again that, in his opinion, it was an impractical solution to churchbuilding problems. "It won't work," he insisted. "You can't do theatre at the same time you're having church services. And you can't have 'beat' or rock music going on while people want to have quiet prayer. So one must find a solution making it possible for people to do what they want in several buildings, just because of acoustical problems, if nothing else."

"In my Thomas Kerk in Amsterdam, the space for rock music is downstairs, the cellar—we call it the 'beat cellar.' The worship space is above it, and there is separate theatre space. This seems to me to be the only practical solution for multiple activities, particularly where they all occur at once."

Mrs. Sijmons had some thoughts of her own at this point. "I think Americans are still thinking too much as Boy Scouts. The younger generation thinks more, and is more involved than any of us were. We found our mystics in the church. The young people can't find them in the church anymore. They find their mysticism in music and drugs, and because they can no longer find mysticism in the church, their finding it elsewhere is a very logical reaction. It's very dangerous, of course, but there's logic to it. And the younger generation wants to throw overboard all our old disciplines and order. After all, what *did* we do with them to make a better world? They must make new order, new disciplines."

To which Mr. Sijmons added, before our interview ended, "People always think that to have an answer to all the questions which perplex a country, the answer must come from another part of the world. But now, all the problems all over the world are the same. And there are no solutions to our questions nowadays."

"With all these problems, and when nobody knows what to do with a church, how is an architect going to make a church?"

ELECTRONIC UTOPIA?*

old E. Wagoner, FAIA
old E. Wagoner & Associates
delphia, Pa.



establishing the shape of religious structures the architect's spectrum of situations is many-sided. He is particularly concerned with the placement of altar, the pulpit, the font and the general tenor and traffic pattern of the worship service peculiar to each congregation. While these are considerations of major importance, it is the location of the choir and organ which has maximum impact upon the ultimate results.

Good music depends not only upon the quality of the performance but also upon the kind of building in which it is presented. The same can be said of preaching. The best sermon, poorly heard, loses its effectiveness. Thus the Science of Sound in Architecture for Worship becomes an important tool of the designer as he strives to create a satisfactory worship space in which speech and music can be enjoyed with equal effectiveness.

Acoustic knowledge has not progressed to the point where "perfect" acoustics can be accurately forecast or guaranteed. This is particularly true in churches where a conflict has existed for years between musicians and organ builders who demanded hard, reflective surfaces, and architects and acousticians who realized that such spaces were ill-suited for the hearing of the spoken word. In fact it could be fairly said that the better a room became for music the worse it became for speech!

But an exciting new development is changing all this. In order to understand the problem we must first examine the physical

processes of hearing. Listening conditions in an enclosed space are dependent upon five factors: 1. the general noise level in the room; 2. the adequacy of the program material, particularly its loudness; 3. the distribution of the sound within the space so that it reaches all listeners with equal intensity; 4. the shape of the space; 5. the reverberation period.

While all of these elements are important, it is the reverberation period which frequently causes the principal concern. (The "Reverberation Period" is defined as the length of time it takes a sound to die into inaudibility.) A long reverberation period is generally good for most music while a short reverberation period is best for the hearing of the spoken word. It is generally considered that it is impractical to design a static structure so that it serves with optimum efficiency for both speech and music. (A static structure is one without a loud-speaker system.) Special experimental rooms have been constructed with movable walls so that varying degrees of sound absorption may be obtained for different kinds of use. Such a system is not feasible in most churches.

Every room has an acoustic "personality" of its own, through reason of its tendency to produce "ringing sounds" when notes of certain frequencies are generated. This can often be demonstrated by the singing voice, without a sound system. These "ringing" sounds are referred to by some acousticians as "room ring Modes." They have been familiar to the organ builders as "bull notes" (i.e. notes which sound many times louder than other notes). They are controlled by materially reducing the loudness of the offending pipes.

While most rooms for worship (even small ones), use an amplification system for increasing the loudness of the spoken

word, not too many use it for music. In spaces which are congenitally bad for listening, the introduction of a loud-speaker system can, in some cases, magnify (rather than lessen) the problem of obtaining satisfactory speech intelligibility. As the loudness level of the speaker system is increased, so does the strength of the ring modes (multiple reflectances) and the consequent distortion of speech becomes more pronounced.

This is true irrespective of where the speakers are placed. It might be interesting to note that there are numerous positions which have been tried for speaker locations. Multiple speakers down the side walls, multiple speakers in the ceiling, multiple speakers on pew backs, multiple speakers under the pew seats! All have been tried with varying results. Most acoustical consultants recommend speakers which are located near to the source of the sound in order that listening may be enjoyed in a climate of naturalness and relaxation. It is a recognized fact that varying speaker locations often produced varying and capricious results, but it was no cure-all, for it did not recognize the basic problem.

The judicious application of sound absorbing materials was often helpful as a remedial measure, but the dead rooms which ensued were an anathema to musicians, organ builders and music lovers.

In studying the behavior of "room ring modes" in relation to electronic voice reinforcement systems, Dr. C. P. Borer, Austin, Texas organist and physicist, observed the similarity between the "ring modes" and the "bull notes" of the organ. He reasoned that if these maverick bull notes of the organ could be tamed by decreasing their loudness, that the same principle might be applied to certain offending frequencies in the

*The above article is an excerpt from a forthcoming work titled *The Science of Sound in Architecture for Worship*, by Harold E. Wagoner, FAIA, for the Lutheran Society for Worship, Music and the Arts. Mr. Wagoner is currently serving as chairman of the Commission on Architecture for the Lutheran Society. He has for many years been active in the affairs of the Guild for Religious Architecture, having served as president and is presently a member of the GRA Board.

loud speaker system. His theory proved to be true.

What Dr. Boner had discovered was that the room ring modes were: (a) single in nature, that is they did not contain overtones; (b) could be minimized by reducing their loudness; (c) were of longer duration, i.e., their reverberation time was many times that of other tones in very close proximity on the scale; (d) were largely responsible for the "garbling" of speech. He overcame these difficulties by introducing filters into the loud speaker amplifiers at the critical frequencies.

Prior to the filter system process it was difficult to increase the loudness of a speaker system in a noisy room because the total electroacoustic system (i.e., the electronic system and the room itself acting as a whole) generated "acoustical feedback" in the system, and a consequent self-regenerative "howl" ensued.

Dr. Boner describes his observations as follows: "A sound system deals with the same acoustic spectrum as the pipe organ. Both have to work in a room. The pipe has to be tone-regulated and tuned to match its room and its particular enclosure, as we well know. The sound system must, therefore, also be tone-regulated. In the organ, broad-band regulating includes setting and regulating wind pressure, use of offset chests, keeping certain sets of pipes physically apart to prevent pulling together, and all sorts of similar procedures. But, when these measures have been taken, the organ finisher must then deal with each pipe, pipe by pipe, and must tone-regulate and tune each pipe as its own entity.

"Thus it is with the custom sound system. It must be broad-band regulated to complement the room and its enclosures, just as the organ is broad-band regulated. Various manufacturers have brought out their own versions of the broad-band filters—all of them rather good. White Instruments, Inc., of Austin was the original manufacturer. Altec Lansing, RCA and DuKane Corporation all have their own versions. All of these are filters covering rather broad bands of the spectrum—one-third octave and one-half and whole-octave for the most part.

"In a highly reverberant or acoustically difficult room, one now has to insert the proper narrow-band filters to insure that speech will be well understood in such rooms. This is because highly reverberant rooms "ring" at discrete frequencies, each of which is a sine wave (styled one Hertz wide). Those parts of the acoustical spectrum which do not happen to contain any of these "ring modes" need not be altered. We see some rooms

which do not contain an appreciable number of serious "ring modes" but very few. A sound system, when it feeds back, always feeds back in sine-wave modes, never in bands of frequencies of any appreciable width. Thus, the concept we developed handles each of these feedback modes—and each of the super ring-modes of the room when they exist in narrow-band filters. They have a bandwidth of about 5 Hz, and their insertion does not affect the remainder of the acoustical spectrum to any important degree."

WESLEY MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH, HIGH POINT, N.C.

At the Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, North Carolina, we had an opportunity to observe the interesting process which is involved in applying Dr. Boner's theories in actual practice.

The High Point Church is a rectangular structure 145 feet long from the chancel wall to the Narthex wall, and 61 feet wide. There are low side aisles beyond the Nave walls. The ridge is 53' above the floor. A pulpit and lectern are located about 40 feet in front of the rear chancel wall. Because of the generous use of limestone on the interior columns, the slate floor and the large volume of the structure in relation to the 1000 seating capacity, there is a long reverberation time (about 4 to 5 seconds).

Multi-cellular horns (loudspeakers) were placed high on this wall, with each "horn" directed at a different area of the congregation. These horns are behind the pulpit and lectern microphones. This is a rather remarkable and unique position. Up until the present time it was desirable (indeed almost mandatory except in rare instances) to place the loud speaker in front of the microphone. To demand that the loudspeakers be placed behind the microphone is a bit like recommending the repeal of the law of gravity!

A crew of four young men had placed several pieces of electronic devices on card tables at the rear center aisle of the Nave. The equipment was perhaps 14 feet in total length (see Fig. 1).

In order to determine the acoustical response of the room and its sound system, a temporary loudspeaker was placed about 4 feet behind the pulpit microphone. "White noise" was ejected into the microphone. This is a sound much like a loud "sh-h-h-h" which contains all of the audible frequencies from 20 to 20,000 cycles per second. This sound was picked up by the pulpit microphone and then broadcast into the room by means of the multicellular horn

loudspeakers located high on the chancel wall.

ACOUSTIC GAIN

"Acoustic Gain" of the room was then established by measuring the sound pressure level at the most distant seat in the room, with the sound system turned off. Then the level at the same receiving point was measured again but with the sound system set a bit below feedback threshold. The system "gain" or feedback was defined as the difference between these two levels. At High Point the gain was about 6 decibels. (Boner notes, "In many existing rooms we have found that the acoustic gain with the sound system in its original uncorrected state, tends to lie between 2 and 8 decibels.")

One of the operators walked through the seating area with a sound level meter and measured the sound pressure level in each band of white noise throughout the entire audio spectrum. These values were then plotted on what is known as a "House Curve" (see Fig. 11). The operator now introduced sine waves into the amplifier (pure tones).

In looking at the heavy line on the diagram, it is evident that the frequency at 245 is behaving in an erratic manner, i.e., it is too loud. This is a "ring mode." It and other ring modes were brought under control in order that the acoustic gain could be insured and speech intelligibility heightened. This was done by inserting filters between the pre-amplifiers and the amplifiers which are a part of the loudspeaker system. They do not remove the sound of the frequency of 245, or other offending frequencies, they simply reduce their loudness. Each filter may be as small as 5 cycles wide, hence it has no effect on frequencies a bit remote from 245, whatever the odd frequency happens to be.

At High Point the total operation took about three days. Many "House Curves" were plotted, and replotted as the peaks and valleys were eliminated. There were many ring modes to be countered; only "broad-band" filters had been used, the time would have been useless. The final house curves look something like the dotted line on Fig. 1. Instead of a 6 decibel gain, the gain was 23 decibels!

Dr. James Huggin, the Minister, referred to the sound system on the main floor as "superior." An ancillary speaker system in the balcony has produced acceptable, if not perfect, results.

In a carefully tuned system, the sound should reach all seats with almost equal intensities. Speech intelligibility at

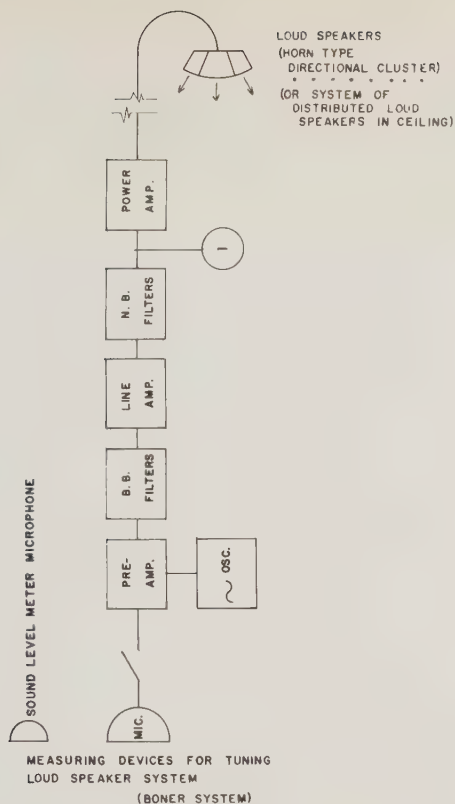
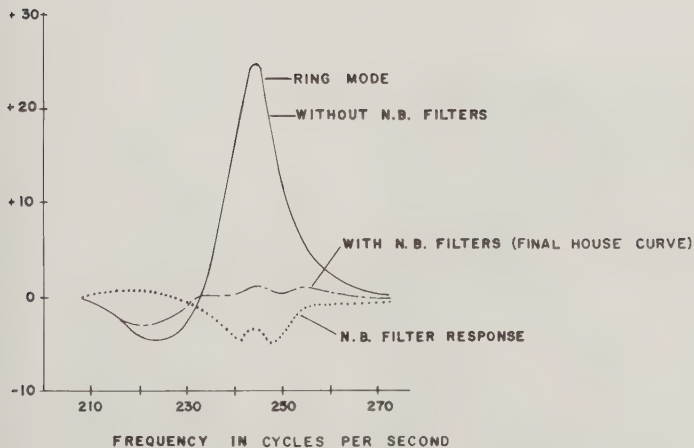


FIGURE I



N.B. = "NARROW BAND" FILTERS, ABOUT 5 CYCLES WIDE

RELATIVE SOUND PRESSURE
LEVEL IN DECIBELS
PORTION OF TYPICAL "HOUSE CURVE"

COURTESY DR. C. P. BONER

FIGURE II

High Point installation was excellent in all areas.

It is claimed that any loudspeaker system can be "tuned" to the particular space in which it is performing if the system design is proper. However, because of the nature of the work, it seems obvious that all of the speaker components must be composed of compatibly related parts. It might be pointed out that those who sell electronic equipment are not always fully acquainted with the exact nature of the parts, nor their precise performance as they relate to each other. An expert should be employed to give proper counsel.

NEW HORIZONS

What does all this mean to the church committee, to the organ builder, to the musician, to the architect?

A great deal, I think. It does *not* mean that every odd shaped structure (especially circular ones) can be made acceptable for both speech and music. It does *not* mean that acoustically absorptive materials will never be employed.

It does mean that there is what appears to be, if not an "Electronic Utopia," at least a vast new horizon of possibilities which hopefully will minimize the difficulties that have plagued the architect in the past as he tried to steer a sensible middle course in the stormy waters which formerly divided good musical acoustics from acceptable speech conditions. It is not a cure-all for all acoustic ills, but at this moment it appears to be a great step forward.

NOTE

For much of the above information we are indebted to Dr. C. P. Boner, particularly his article "Minimizing Feedback In Sound Systems and Room-Ring Modes With Passive Networks." This was reprinted from the Journal of Acoustical Society of America, January 1965.

We are also indebted to Don Davis for his article "Voice, Finish and Regulate a Sound System, Why Not?" (The Diapason, November, 1967). Mr. Davis represents Altec-Lansing. This company offers a service called "Acousta-Voicing." This system employs Boner patents and uses filters which vary from an octave in width to one-tenth of an octave. The system used at the High Point Church used much smaller "narrow band" filters. Such narrow band filters are necessary in certain structures if very excellent results are to be achieved. It is our understanding that RCA as well as two or three other companies will shortly announce a service of tuning based on Boner patents. ■

COMMENT ON MULTI-PURPOSE WORSHIP SPACES

Grace United Methodist Church
Friendly, Maryland
Benjamin P. Elliott Associates—Architects
Silver Spring, Maryland



The issue of whether a space that is planned to be used for worship can appropriately be used also for other purposes in community life is a matter which has been under discussion in recent years. *The Secular Use of Church Buildings* by J. G. Davies, which was reviewed in an earlier issue of *Faith and Form* (Vol. 1, July 1968), has focused entirely on the question, for instance, and it has been attacked in a practical way in practically every community. Even among the Roman Catholics it is no longer unknown to have an Eucharistic room planned with the intent that it should serve as an assembly place for non-liturgical, and even "secular" uses.

To many Americans the question has not been an issue. The Puritan meeting house has provided the model of a place which gathered the secular and the cultic under one roof. Theological currents of the last few years, which have termed Christianity a "secular religion," and have aimed at bringing the life of the church into the closest possible relevance to day-by-day life, have affected attitudes toward architecture. The thesis is this: that if we see God's presence revealed or reflected in all worthy and

useful human activity, then these enterprises have a quality of sacredness about them; and it cannot be wrong or inappropriate to provide shelter for them in the same place where the presence of God is proclaimed in worship.

Indeed the point may be underscored. One can assert with some security that worship is most real and fruitful when it touches the secular (or total) life of people most closely and continuously, where its forms and expressions are least esoteric, most "secular." If one takes this position one can also assert that it is wrong to set a space apart purely for liturgical uses—to do so tends to separate liturgy from life.

The other side of the argument may run this way: That the most natural (secular) attitude toward building which we know is that which provides special spaces for special purposes. We provide a variety of rooms for a variety of different functions in our homes, schools, offices, shops; since liturgy is a distinct kind of activity, what is more natural than to provide it a distinct enclosure.

Those who adopt this position are logically willing to agree that where frugality or lack of resources demand, it is not wrong to use a single space for many purposes including cultic ones. If we can't afford five-room houses we settle for studio apartments.

I have recently been made aware of a projected building venture which is being undertaken in a suburban situation. The members of this parish, which is now a few years old, are mostly people who live in homes with two-car garages, two-and-a-half baths and the other evidences of comfortable affluence. They have steadily resisted what they call tritely the "edifice complex" in respect to their parish, preferring, they say, to put their money into programs. And they have indeed developed a commendable series of enterprises in community service in which they invest both time and money.

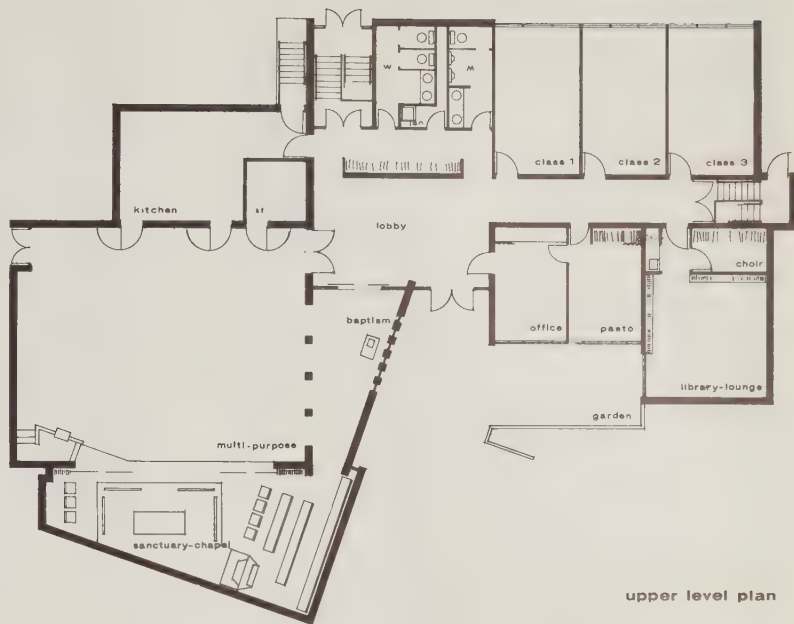
As this parish approaches what they perceive to be the necessity of building, they are determined that their structure will exhibit their critical attitude toward "ostentatious" church building. It will be extremely low cost in material and

and will, of course, combine work-space with dining room, teaching space and playroom—the “studio apartment church.” What troubles me, and I wonder if it troubles them, is that these are not studio apartment people. The church building is likely to be a sort of demonstration poverty,” and I wonder whether there is something better about a sort of affectation than the affectation of the “edifice complex” against which they are reacting.

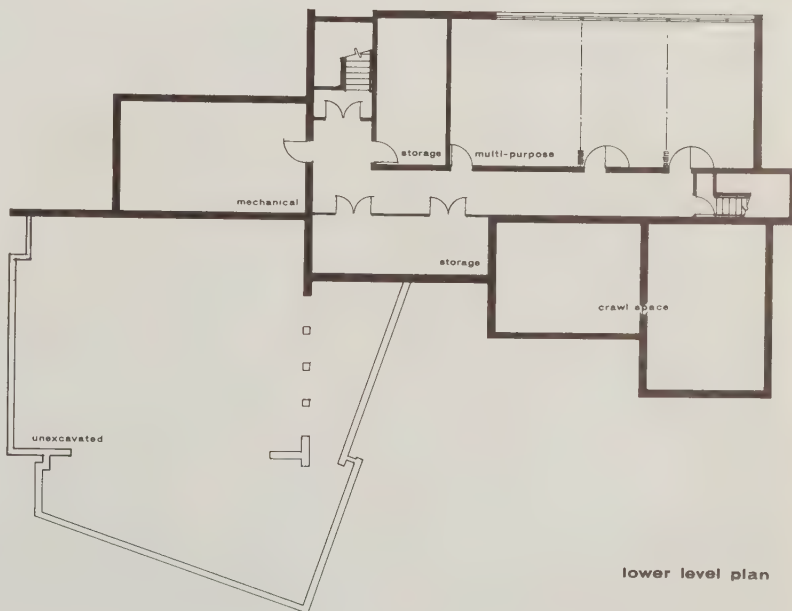
It is not all multi-purpose spaces are so consciously evolved. In a conversation with the publisher of *Faith and Form* at a restaurant table some months ago, Elliott described to me the design project which was then occupying his mind. Drawings of the project which is a moderate income parish in southern Minnesota are, I think, worth sharing with *Faith and Form* readers. There seems to be neither affectation nor gimmickery in the project; it goes about its intentions with the same logic that one might use in a non-ecclesiastical project, which suggests to me that it is a good witness to “secular religion.” In a letter about the project Elliott has written these explanatory sentences:

We have developed the plan to make use of space. The main hall would be utilized for both fellowship and worship—the rolling slatted door closing off the chancel area while the room is being used for fellowship purposes. When the door is open, the character of the space changes revealing the chancel and baptistry. The baptistry passage and pulpit are in a part of the multipurpose room, presenting the inter-relationship of religious and secular life. During the service, people would be encouraged to move through the baptismal passage into the chancel, which would then become an all chapel independent of the fellowship hall. The other facilities are self-explanatory . . . you will note that there is no sacristy. The proximity of the kitchen will serve this purpose . . . and the general office will have cabinets to store necessary paraments. . . . We expect to use an interlocking, wood stack-chair. . . . The multi-use space in the upper level would be used for older members of Sunday School, and when divided into a single room, would provide for varied youth activities. The new building, which replaces an old church of adequate size, circa 1880, will allow the congregation to double its size and increase its programmed activities.” ■

E. A. Sövik, FAIA
Sövik, Mathre & Madson
Northfield, Minn.



upper level plan



lower level plan



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Notes from an Architect's Diary:

Norman Mansell, FAIA
Mansell, Lewis & Fugate
Philadelphia, Pa.



December 10: Our accountant read today that our unpaid accounts are a problem and that we'd need to get payment on at least 50% of them to show profit before the year's end. I guess it's to send out our usual "crying towel" as.

December 15: Pastor J. said that our payment for working drawings, now unpaid for six months, came as a surprise. He pondered but didn't raise the question of whether he meant the statement or non-payment was a surprise.

December 20: The Rev. H. said by phone today that our fresh new design for a concrete parabolic shell at the church entrance, penetrating the faceted church wall, reminded him of the tomb. Wonder what he meant at.

January 5: Chairman L. wrote an interesting letter about our church designs, pointing out that the sides and rear of the building looked as well as the front—sometimes better! Curious—was this supposed to be a compliment?

January 10: Mr. B., the temperamental

choir director of the Methodist Church who cowed the Building Committee, sweet-talked support among the lady choir members, and who wanted and got a two-story rehearsal room with acoustical mobiles, reversible and variable ceiling absorptive panels, and a chancel choir which would have done justice to Flo Ziegfield, has just left the congregation for greener pastures, without a real local test of his showmanship. I used to kid people about the spotlighting of the chancel choir designed to cast a halo as it came through the blond hair beyond the cap of a dizzy blonde choir singer. This director really believed in such procedures. I'd give a lot to see and hear the new prospective choir director review the situation.

January 30: Designing for multiple choirs at a church service sometimes presents a space problem. For one church a preliminary design pocketed a children's choir in a way that while they could readily be heard, they were not very visible. Mrs. K., their director, demanded that they should be visible or

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their parents would object. As far as I am concerned—after hearing them at rehearsal—the statement was probably based upon the principle that children should be seen and not heard.

February 20: Our statement of five months ago will be paid in another month or so, said J. D., our liaison man with _____ Church. Apparently at its first appearance before the officers, it was overlooked; the next month it was approved, and the secretary forgot to get it to the treasurer; the treasurer then went to Europe for two months, and if they cash in the Building and Loan Certificates, they will lose some interest—plus the fact that the original statement is now lost and they want to know, can we send a copy.

March 4: That the Ides of March are here seems indicated by a talented church architect who said to me today: "I've grown more understanding and philosophical than I used to be. When some unreasonable building committee changes the program to fit a lowered budget, or asks me to change the working drawings again, I say to myself,

these people need help and they are in the right organization because they certainly need their religion. Then I pray again."

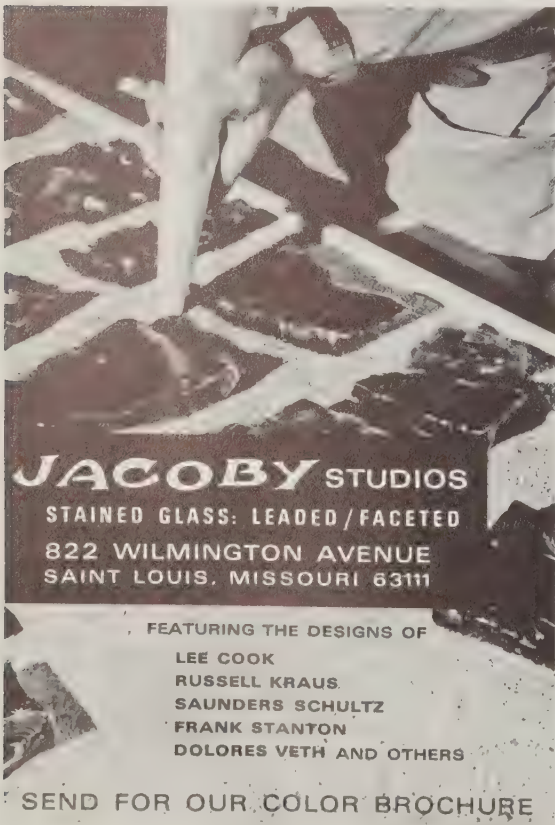
March 16: Well, I've done it again! I've sold a new church committee the reasonableness of designing for their needs, and not for a pre-conceived historic envelope into which we would stuff the rooms regardless of requirements—and I've still got a clear conscience. I said that although some influential people in the congregation demanded a Colonial building, that if our design with rose brick and white trim were built, and if these people were walking past it and asked what style it was, they would say, "Well, it's Colonial, isn't it?" And if the answer was Yes, they would be satisfied. They agreed with me that people with an indefinite knowledge of what was Colonial, should not design their building. That should be left to the architect. Heaven, or at least the profession, should add a segment to my halo.

April 1: We like a light touch in a Pastor, which leavens the really serious intent of his responsibility. Today, while

talking with Pastor Daniel D. Kistler who had just earned a D.D. after name, I said, "Just imagine your father being farsighted enough to name a 'D. D. Kistler' knowing he might be a clergyman who would earn a D.D. and his name and be called D. D. Kistler D.D." Quick as a flash, he answered "You didn't know my father."

April 15: We estimate that if a builder who has won the contract to build a church structure, were to swap his usual subcontractors for subcontractors in a congregation who would do the work at cost and without any profit, that the price would increase by at least 15%.

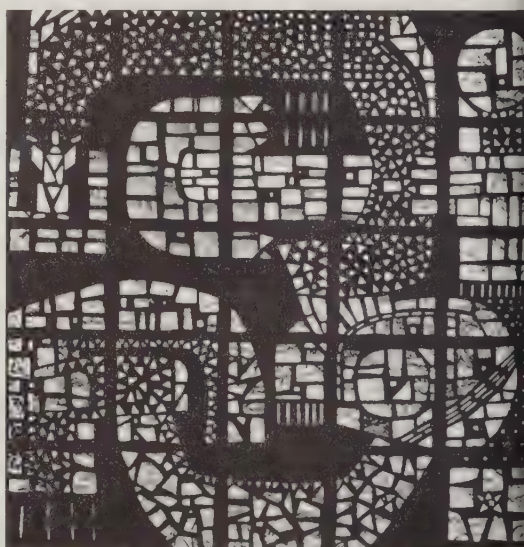
May 3: My irritation at either naive simplicity or the artful duplicity of brother practitioners who write about commonplace architectural practices and principles as though they were ground and newly discovered truths, is undiminished. If they are young architects, I attribute this to their expanding naive knowledge and enthusiasm; if well advanced in years, to capitalizing on a knowledge of human nature. There is some humor in this situation since



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rompted me to write a treatise on
cting the Architect," which even I
nd difficult to justify.

e 7: Pretty Miss Kelley, who chaired
esearch Committee to program the
rements for the new beginners and
ry Sunday School classes last fall,
ed today to see if we would take an
the Building Booklet. She was non-
ed by my statement that ethical
ects just could not advertise. How-
by training I am qualified to assess
appreciate beauty wherever it is
d, so I generously offered the sug-
on that if she would just place in the
ace, "Compliments of a Friend," a
x would be sent. She thanked me
sely—although beauty is its own
rd.

e 17: Somehow Christians don't
ve their own philosophy. They will
that only God is perfect, that it is
an to err, that neither the building,
rchitect, nor the pastor is perfect.
ever, heaven help the architect after
gns the contract. Then he'd better
perfect—or else.

e 29: Sometimes my self admira-

tion knows no bounds, and particularly
when a committee of fine ladies is ap-
ointed to work with the architect to
establish the color of finishes for a new
building, and I am able to control the
result. I first explain that each woman
has an innate and natural talent for color
as their beautiful homes will attest (as
though the composite total of each home
could be likened to a pure beautiful
color). Then I explain that just as a mix-
ture of all pigments of every color results
in mud, a mixture of their pure talents
would each cancel out the other and
defeat our purpose to select colors to
enhance the architecture, and not to
satisfy our personal preferences. Next, I
tell them of all the scores of materials
involved in color selection, each with
their often variable color charts, re-
quiring (truthfully) the laying out of
many wall, floor, trim, paint and plastic
materials for visually relating, which
must be viewed in our office near our
sample room, involving several days at
a time. Next they see a complex chart—
three feet by four feet, of manufacturer's
color code numbers and patterns. Fin-

ally, bless them, wisely, after a few con-
structive comments and warnings, they
leave it to the architect.

July 3: In planning the kitchen there
are some things better left unsaid to the
ladies' kitchen committee. I've never
said, all you females think you are prima
donnas in the kitchen and you aren't;
cooking for several hundred people just
isn't the same as cooking for your family;
most of you don't really know much
about kitchen production line processes;
and you ought to keep the serving women
out of the kitchen or they will rush in at
their prerogative and disrupt the whole
meal—but I'd like to.

July 16: Sound control is still an art
rather than a science, and in spite of
sincere effort and careful design, sound
dead spots will occasionally result in a
new church nave. I think every church
should have one; its popularity will con-
stitute an assessment of the success of
the Pastor as a preacher. An alternate
special feature might be a disappearing
pulpit, which after twenty minutes of a
sermon, sank below the floor and dis-
charged the Pastor into a nether region.



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NOTES & COMMENTS Continued from page 5

NORTH SUBURBAN TOUR:



Grace Chapel Lutheran
Architects: Manske & Dieckmann



Bellefontaine Methodist Church
Architects: P. John Hoener & Associates

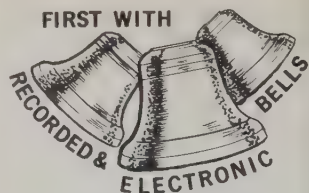
WEST SUBURBAN TOUR:



Temple Israel
Architects: Hellmuth, Obata, Kassabaum



The Priory Chapel
Architects: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum



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leader in electronic church organs, announces the appointment of GRA member John J. Tyrrell to its staff. A "Design for Music" seminar panelist at the 1968 conference, Mr. Tyrrell is an architect/specialist in organ design and is available for your consultation. Contact him at the St. Louis conference or write direct c/o ALLEN ORGAN COMPANY, Macungie, Pa 18062

MISSION ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION

In recent years a number of European architects and artists have become interested in using their time and talent to the Mission Architecture of the Black Continent of Africa. An organization called the "Mission Architects Association" (MAA), was founded in 1957 with headquarters in Widnau, Switzerland. The inspiration originated with Mr. Albert Renger-Patzsch, a famous sculptor known far beyond the borders of Switzerland. Early in life his father took him to Africa, and in 1947 he himself stayed with missionaries in Algiers, Madagascar, Tanzania, and other mission centers. Renger-Patzsch and more, Wider became impressed with native expression in song and dance, in arts and rites, environment, landscape structures. He was also disturbed and disconcerted by the effect of alien influences upon indigenous art and architecture. His interest in the Black Continent grew into love for the people and culture of Africa. The imposition of strange European clichés, conventions and cultures upon these native tribes was completely contrary to the artist's ideals. Wider determined to do something about the situation.

In 1957 he had succeeded in recruiting a number of sympathetic and well-known Swiss

architects and artists who shared Mr. Wider's enthusiasm. Thus, the Mission Architects Association was born. Since then, architects from other countries have become interested in the MAA and joined it. They have already exerted a great influence upon the design and construction of Houses of Worship based entirely on native expression and culture. The universal mission of religious conviction must again tie the bonds, severed by alien domination and expression. The Church must learn to comprehend, use and express the simple, pure beauty, charity and truth which dwell in the African soul.

The Mission Architects Association has its own statutes, defining its purposes, endeavors, requirements of membership, organization, proposals of assignments and international cooperation. At the World's Fair in Brussels the MAA had its own exhibition featuring its achievements. The magazine "Revue Art d'Eglise" printed a special issue about the projects already completed and showed models of future work in the planning stage. A similar exhibition took place in Munich a few years ago.

In addition to its concern about architecture, the MAA has been influential in the redesign of the liturgical vestment in Africa. This is based on the native dress of the immediate area and not on European models.

Vatican II has made this change possible.

Groups in the United States are involved in many Mission areas. Would it not be possible that an organization similar to the Mission Architects Association could work more effectively in these areas rather than on an individual basis?

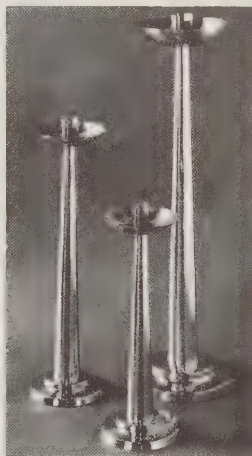
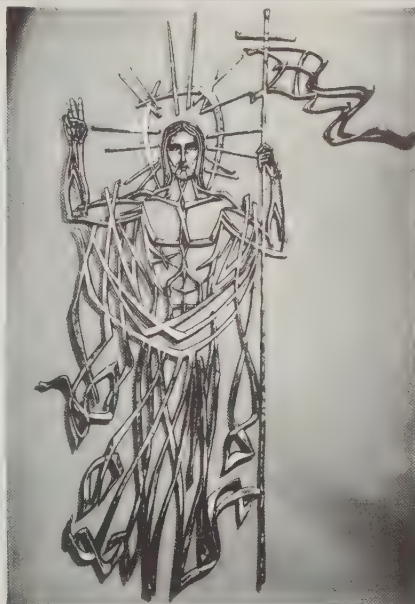
Brother Cajetan J. B. Baumann, OFM, FAIA □

LETTERS Continued from page 6

Christi in Aachen and St. Christopher's in Cologne; in these one is not aware of any image-making. They are good not because they look like something else or remind one of some other object or thing, but because they are indeed good things themselves. This is not to say that such a good building is not a symbol; it is. But it is not a symbol of a symbol. Some of Schwartz churches are wildly bizarre. This is surely because they are symbols of symbols, images rather than realities.

If a church is an image in the sense that Schwartz proposes, it cannot but lose its reality and become fantasy; its authenticity is compromised. It is, in my mind, an inappropriate place for authentic people to do authentic things. In other words it is a bad church.

A reader





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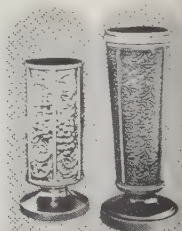
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